Police vol 15. 11.

UNITING AND MONOPOLIZING FARMS,

Plainly proved disadvantageous to the

LAND-OWNERS,

And highly prejudicial to the

PUBLIC.

To which are added,

Several Observations shewing the Causes of the present high prices of all kind of Provisions.

The Second Edition, much Enlarged and Improved,

By JOHN LEWIS.

IPSWICH: Printed by W. JACKSON.
Sold by J. SHAVE, in Ipswich; by Mr. LONGMAN, Pater-noster Row, and Mr. M. HINGESTONE in the Strand, London. 1772.

(Price ONE SHILLING)

PREFACE.

THE former edition of this work printed in 1767 was publiſhed without my name, which gave me an opportunity of hearing the ſentiments of many perſons who ſpoke their thoughts freely upon it. As to the main ſcope and deſign, I do not know that any have objected to it with any colour of reaſon, only ſome have doubted whether this practice of Uniting and Monopolizing of Farms, was *general* throughout the kingdom, or only *local*; and perhaps chiefly ſo in thoſe parts where I have been moſt converſant. To this I reply, the chief of my remarks have been

drawn from obſervations made in the counties of Suffolk and Eſſex; where I have had the greateſt experience. And though I have been in many other parts of the kingdom, & turned my thoughts to theſe ſubjects, yet I do not take upon me to aſſert it poſitively from my own knowledge, in all places; only that like *cauſes* will in all places have like *effects*. And at this time it is much complained of by all ranks of people, and thought to be a matter of great *importance*. But as a further proof that the practice is not local, I will produce a foreign evidence from a book lately publiſhed by Rd. Price, D. D. F. R. S. entitled "Obſervations on Reverſionary "Payments, Annuities, &c." ſecond edition, in the ſupplement to which this ingenious author draws many obſervations from the works of Mr. Muret, firſt miniſter of the town of Vevey

Vevey, in the province of Bern in Switzerland; and at page 359 mentions, that "Mr. Muret enters into a general account of the cauſes which obſtruct population in his country. Among theſe he inſiſts particularly on Luxury and the Engroſſing of Farms." And Doctor Price adds, "I wiſh his obſervations on theſe ſubjects were not applicable to the preſent ſtate of this kingdom: But perhaps, there is no kingdom in the world to which they are ſo applicable."

Again, "With reſpect particularly to the cuſtom of *engroſſing farms*, Mr. Muret obſerves with the higheſt reaſon, that a large tract of land in the hands of one man, does not yield ſo great a return, as when in the hands of ſeveral, nor does it employ ſo many people; and as a proof of this, he

" mentions two parishes in the district of " Vaud, one of which (once a little " village) having been bought by some " rich men, was sunk into a single " *demesne*: and the other (once a single " *demesne*) having fallen into the hands " of some peasants, was become a little " village." And Dr. Price puts this quere, " how many facts of the former kind " can this country now furnish?" and soon after adds, " the high price of all " the means of subsistance, occasioned " certainly by this practice, as well as " by the heavy weight of our taxes, " has long been the object of universal " complaint; and it is growing more " so every day, and spreading every " where; checking marriage, loading " our manufactures, and diminishing " the number of our people."

I do not remember any other material objection that has been made to the former

mer edition. The great farmers have been a little diſpleaſed with me, but having conſidered thoſe paſſages which I apprehend they might diſlike, I did not chuſe to make any great alteration in them. My principal charge againſt the great farmers, is their *ingroſſing* ſo many farms, and reducing them into one occupation: and in that, I think the land-owners are moſt to blame, for they certainly had it in their own power to prevent it, and no good excuſe can be made for them, unleſs they did it ignorantly; for in doing ſo they acted contrary to their own intereſt, and much to the prejudice of the whole community; as this practice *muſt depopulate the country, and leſſen the quantity of proviſions that might be raiſed from their lands.* All which, I preſume, will evidently appear in the following ſheets. And I hope, that when the evil tenden-

cy of this practice is more known, it will not be ſo general as it now is; which was the ſole motive with me for publiſhing this work.

In this ſecond edition I have made conſiderable alterations & additions relating to my main ſubject, *the monopolizing of farms:* which with a few other obſervations ſubjoined, clearly ſhew the principal *cauſes* of the preſent high prices of all kinds of proviſions.

UNITING

AND

MONOPOLIZING

FARMS, &c.

THE preſent *high price of all kinds of proviſions*, is an evil very grievous to a great part of the inhabitants of this kingdom, which has cauſed many riots and inſurrections in divers parts of it. The parliament has been addreſſed by ſome of our principal towns, begging they will take the matter into conſideration, in order to give *a preſent relief*, and alſo to prevent any *male practices* among

among thoſe who either raiſe or deal in any of the neceſſaries of life.

At this time, much the greater part of all ranks of people ſeem to agree in a ſuppoſition, that our laws relating to the common neceſſaries of life, are either *defective*, or not *duly executed*. For they reaſon thus, " that there " is not any viſible cauſe which will account " for the preſent ſcarcity; the laſt harveſt " was thought to be rather a plentiful one; " the diſtemper among the horned cattle has " ſo long ceaſed, that its effects cannot influ- " ence the preſent times; and nothing re- " markable has happened likely to occaſion " this preſent want." This kind of reaſoning creates a ſuſpicion that the produce of our lands are either *exported clandeſtinely*, or elſe *ingroſſed* into a few hands to be dealt out at an exorbitant price. But whether the preſent high prices of proviſions are owing to a real or an artificial ſcarcity, will I hope, plainly appear in the courſe of this work.

In all diſeaſes of the *body politic*, as well as the

the body natural, the firſt ſtep towards a cure is to find out the nature and cauſe of the diſeaſe. And though the cauſe of this *ſcarcity* is in general, and with good reaſon chiefly attributed to the practice which has of late too much prevailed, of Uniting and Monopolizing of Farms; yet, it has not, that I know of, been ſufficiently explained as it deſerves to be. And, for ſome time paſt, I have been fully convinced, that this cuſtom of laying ſmall farms together to make large ones, is, in general, prejudicial to the owners of ſuch eſtates; but more particularly attended with bad conſequences to the public; eſpecially in farms conſiſting of *arable-lands*; as it certainly is the cauſe of a leſs quantity of proviſions being raiſed from the ſame lands; and alſo greatly tends to depopulate the country.

To prove the bad conſequences of this practice, I ſhall lay down this inconteſtable truth, as the baſis on which my whole ſcheme depends: viz. that *large farms* conſiſting moſtly of arable lands, are not uſually lett at ſo great

great a rent, acre for acre, as *ſmall farms* generally are; and that, the greater the difference is in the quantities of land, the greater is the difference in the rate by the acre. For in my opinion, were we to compare the rents of lands of this ſort, held and uſed in different quantities, for example, one farm of 50l. a year, and another of 300l. a year, both naturally of equal goodneſs; in moſt caſes it would be found, that the tenant to that farm of 50l. a year pays as much rent for three acres of land, as the tenant to that farm of 300l. a year pays for four acres. Of conſequence it follows, that this large farm of 300l. a year, is capable of being divided into eight ſmall farms of 50l a year each; and ſo the rent of the whole, was it divided and uſed in eight ſuch ſmall farms, would be advanced to 400l. a year; and the value of the produce raiſed from theſe lands by the eight occupiers, would be advanced in as large a proportion.

As what I have aſſerted above may be doubted of, by perſons who are not converſant in

buſineſs

buſineſs of this kind, I will endeavour to explain myſelf and give ſufficient reaſons to convince them, that the *rent and produce* raiſed from the ſame lands by eight farmers of the whole, in all probability, would exceed that raiſed by one occupier of the whole, in as large a proportion as that above mentioned. For this purpoſe I will conſider theſe ſame lands in two different ſtates; that is, firſt, as if *held and uſed* all in one occupation, and then, as if *divided and uſed* in eight different occupations. In both caſes, as the lands are ſuppoſed to be the ſame, ſo the value of the produce raiſed from them muſt depend on the labour and manure beſtowed on them, and the care and pains taken to turn that produce to the beſt advantage.

A few years paſt, before the prices of every article of the produce of a farm roſe ſo high as they now are, it was then generally allowed that in farms conſiſting moſtly of arable lands, unleſs the occupiers one year with another, made the value of three years rent from them, they could not live ſo as to ſupport themſelves and families: but the preſent times

are ſuch as ſufficiently warrant me to *aſſert*, that for ſome years paſt the produce of their lands, one year with another, if properly cultivated, amounted to the full value of *four years rent*, at leaſt. Suppoſing therefore that they all raiſe from their lands full the value of four years rent; the value of the produce of the whole as one farm would be 1200l. a year; but the value of the whole as eight farms would be 1600 l. a year: thus the *increaſed produce* of the whole as eight farms, would exceed the produce of the whole as one farm, at leaſt 400l. a year, equal to one whole year's rent of the lands in the moſt improved ſtate. And this 400l. would be *an increaſe of riches to the nation*; not like what is gained in trade amongſt ourſelves, by which if one man grows rich, it is by drawing to himſelf the profits which others in the ſame way muſt be deprived of: So that ſuch a tradeſman may fitly be compared to a luxuriant overgrowing tree, under the ſhade of which nothing will thrive: But the *good farmer* is like a tree whoſe ſhade is friendly, that yields a comfortable ſupport and nouriſhment to all around it.

It

It is not neceſſary now to uſe any arguments to prove that good farmers actually raiſe from their lands, one year with another, the full value of four years rent. I ſhall therefore take that for granted, and endeavour to prove my main point, viz. that the occupiers of *ſmall-farms* raiſe a greater produce from their lands, and are able to pay a greater rent for them, than is generally given by the occupiers of large farms; and that too, in as large a proportion as above mentioned.

In ſmall farms the greateſt part of the buſineſs is generally done by the farmer and his family; and no more help is hired than for ſuch work as they cannot find time to do themſelves. And thus, great part of the labour being done by them, there is a *conſiderable ſaving* on that account; when in the large farms, all is to be paid for out of the produce of the lands: for in theſe, the farmer and his family ſeldom do more than inſpect and direct. But in the ſmall farms, what is thus earned by theſe families, is not the *only advantage*, for

as

as they are *intereſted* in the ſucceſs of what they do, ſo in all probability it will be done in a more careful and frugal manner. Beſides, with them *all improvements* are more minutely attended to, the plough and the ſpade are carried cloſe to their hedges, and no borders or corners eſcape them: when in the large farms, 'tis common to ſee borders, thickets, and corners uncultivated; and ſome lands which lie at a diſtance neglected on that account. As it coſts much labour and time to bring the crops from thoſe diſtant lands, and to carry the manure made at the barns upon them again; ſo, for that reaſon, ſeldom any is laid on them: thus, of courſe they muſt become poor, and therefore are laid down, and called *off-lands*, to run young cattle, &c. upon, but do not turn to that advantage they would have done, if duly cultivated. On the contrary, in ſmall farms, the diſtance of the lands from the barns is not likely to be ſo great, and therefore they are not ſo apt to be neglected as in the great ones. To theſe articles of ſaving in the leſſer farms, which are

the men's part, I ſhall add what comes under the women's care; which is the *dairy*, &c. For in ſmall farms of this kind, there are more cows, pigs, and poultry kept on them, in proportion to the quantity of land, than there are on the larger ſort; where theſe articles are ſeldom carried much farther than juſt for the uſe of their own families: when in the ſmall ones, the women take this as their province, and carefully improve it. And out of this they not only ſupply their own families, but make ſale of enough to cloth themſelves and children in part, if not altogether, and to provide many other neceſſaries for the family. By theſe the *neighbourhood* are better ſupplied with butter, cheeſe, milk, veal, pigs, eggs, and fowls of all ſorts, than they are by large farmers; and though much more might be added, yet, to all that are not biaſſed, this, I think, ſufficient to convince them, that the occupiers of ſmall farms *certainly raiſe more* from their lands, in proportion to the quantity, than the occupiers of the larger ſort. For the families in the ſmall farms moſtly

earn more than it coſts to maintain them; and if to this we add, their improving more minutely and carefully, every part, not only of the land, but of the dairy, &c. I am of opinion there can be no reaſon to doubt, but that the tenants to the ſmall farms, would be able to pay their rents according to this ſuppoſition, full as well as the tenants to the larger farms.

This is not a meer ſuppoſition, but a fair repreſentation, in general, of the different *œconomy*, in farms of ſuch difference in magnitude. And as to the article of *cows*, I have often obſerved with concern, in the counties of Suffolk and Eſſex in particular, that the number of them now kept is much leſs than uſed to be kept on the ſame lands thirty or forty years ago: all owing to the preſent cuſtom of *monopolizing of farms*. For thoſe who do ingroſs ſo many farms into one occupation, ſeldom keep any cows but on one of them, where they live; and thoſe only to ſupply their own families, with a ſmall overplus for their labourers: as for all the other farms, if they have houſes

left

left to them, theſe are generally occupied by their labourers. But when they were in their *former ſtate, occupied by the farmers of the lands belonging to them*, then there were cows kept on each of them, and moſtly in proportion to the quantity of land. And 'tis certain that the greater number of cows are kept, the greater plenty of butter, cheeſe, veal, and pork, are likely to be raiſed. And the more cattle are kept on the ſame lands, the greater quantity of manure muſt be raiſed for the improvement of them; and conſequently they will thereby yield the greater increaſe. Thus it appears, that almoſt every circumſtance attending this practice of *monopolizing of farms*, muſt leſſen the produce of thoſe lands, and deprive us of that *peace and plenty* we uſed to enjoy, and now want.

Having ſhewn how the occupiers of ſmall farms are able to raiſe a greater quantity of proviſions from, and pay a greater rent for, the ſame lands, than what the large farmers either raiſe or pay: I will in the next place endea-

vour to ſhew, that *uniting* ſmall farms together to make large ones, naturally tends to *depopulate the country, increaſe the number of poor, and the rates raiſed for the relief of the poor.* And for this, I will again conſider ſuch a large farm in two different ſtates as before; and from thence make eſtimates, and calculate the number of people likely to be dependent on them, when held and uſed in ſuch different proportions.

Firſt, I'll begin with conſidering theſe lands, as if all were in one farmer's occupation, and I will ſuppoſe his family to conſiſt of himſelf, a wife, three children, * and twelve ſervants; in all ſeventeen perſons. To theſe we muſt add the number of the labourers and their families depending on this farm: the labourers I ſuppoſe to be ten, and, each labourer to have a wife and three children: ſo the number

* The number of births to every marriage are about four to one, or ſomewhat more upon a calculation for all England one, with another. See Derham's Phyſico Theol. p. 174. 7th edit. And from Dr. Halley's tables of the degrees of Mortality of mankind; it appears that one child in four dies, before it attains to the age of five years. Therefore I cannot think it reaſonable to ſuppoſe more than three children to a family one with another.

ber of all the labourers families together is fifty.

To the number of the farmer's family, which is,	17
Add the number of ten labourers and their families,	50
And the whole number depending on all the large farm, while held in one occupation is	67

Then, to compute the number of perſons likely to be dependent on the ſame lands contained in this large farm, when divided and occupied according to the foregoing ſuppoſition, in eight ſeparate farms of 50 l. a year each.

In each of thoſe eight farms, I will ſuppoſe a farmer, his wife, three children and two ſervants; that is ſeven in each family. And that each of theſe farms ſhould have a labourer to it, with five in each labourer's family; then the number of perſons depending on theſe

lands, when thus divided into eight ſeparate farms, will ſtand thus;

In each of theſe farms, I ſuppoſe	
A farmer and his family,	7
A labourer and his family	5
The number of perſons depending on each farm is	12
And that multiplied by the number of farms.	8
Gives the number of perſons depending on all the eight together.	96
From which ſubſtract the number	67
And the difference is	29

Thus it appears that the *number of perſons* likely to be depending on theſe lands while occupied and uſed as one farm, is but ſixty ſeven; whereas, if they were turned into, and uſed as eight ſeparate farms, they would be likely to have depending on them ninety-ſix perſons;

perſons; which is twenty-nine more than the ſuppoſed compliment of the ſame lands, if held and occupied as one farm.

In this manner, and from this cauſe, the number of our people are *diminiſhed*, and the nation is deprived of a great part of its *ſtrength*; as theſe ſmall farmers are as able bodied, and hardy a ſet of people as any of its inhabitants; being conſtantly enured to labour in the open air, and better fed than the poor, nay perhaps better fed than the rich farmers; *fed*, I mean, in ſuch a manner as contributes more to their *health* and *ſtrength*: for the rich farmers ſeem to be running apace into the *enfeebling luxuries* of their wealthy landlords. Likewiſe our *trade* muſt ſuffer by it; as every individual perſon, one with another, has been computed to pay 6l. a year to our rents and manufactures. And beſides theſe I apprehend there are other conſequences likely to follow from the different claſſes or ranks of the people, very *detrimental* to the community. For in the account of the whole, while conſidered as one farm, the number of the labourers and their families,

families, are about three times as many as the number of the farmer's family: though indeed, if we conſider that all the ſervants in this farmer's family are taken from the labourers families, the *difference* will then be ſtill greater, and moſt likely as great as ten to one. When on the contrary, were the ſame lands uſed as eight farms, the number of the farmers families and thoſe of the labourers, might be conſidered as equal, or nearly ſo: by ſuppoſing ſome of their ſervants taken from their own claſs, and ſome from that of the labourers.

Theſe numbers being thus explained, I will next endeavour to ſhew, which ſet of people *depending* on the ſame lands, i. e. thoſe while uſed as one farm, or thoſe while uſed as eight farms, are likely to be moſt uſeful to the public.

Firſt, I will ſuppoſe it to be uſed all as one farm; in which caſe it is computed there would be ſixty-ſeven perſons *dependent* thereon: of which as we cannot ſuppoſe many

more

more than the maſter, miſtreſs and three children, but what are taken from the families of the labourers, or the lower claſs; ſo it is reaſonable to expect there would be at leaſt, ten of the lower claſs to one of the other. And if we rate all the perſons in this great farmer's family and all his labourers and their families, according to the degree of *reſpect* we ought to have for each claſs, as *uſeful members of the community*; in my opinion, all the perſons depending on theſe lands while uſed as one farm, cannot be ſo uſeful to the public, as thoſe dependent on the ſame lands in eight different farms would be. In the latter caſe, there would be as many of the farmers families as of the labourers, and though the whole number would be increaſed as ninety-ſix to ſixty-ſeven, even then the number of the labourers and their families would be leſs than when the whole was held as one farm. And theſe farmers in the leſſer occupations, are in general, a laborious, honeſt, frugal ſet of people, living as they ought to do, in peace and great regularity; or at leaſt more ſo, than either of the

other

other two claſſes; namely, the families of the great farmers, and the families of the labourers: for the firſt are thought more apt, than the ſmall farmers, to withhold their corn and cattle, in order to advance the price of them, to the oppreſſion of all, and the diſtreſs of the indigent; and thoſe who do ſo cannot ſtand high in our eſteem.* And as to the labourers, they ſeldom keep their children ſo regularly employed as the ſmall farmers: not only ſo, but in many of the labourers families, 'tis frequent to ſee them brought up without any *ſenſe of religion*, or proper notions of *right and wrong*, and from their infancy accuſtomed to, and

* Though the great farmers often ſpeculate on the markets, and keep back their corn, &c. in expectation of greater prices for them: yet I am inclined to think that the conſequences are not ſo prejudicial as many are apt to believe. For as the leſſer farmers are moſt of them under a neceſſity of ſelling early in the year, by which the markets are regularly ſupplied in the firſt part: And the great farmers having large quantities of corn, they are not often able to get all out before the latter end of the year: at which time the markets are ſupplied by them. And whatever their intention may be, if they do not keep it to be waſted or damaged, (which their own intereſt will make them careful of) they anſwer all the purpoſes of public magazines, and it is better kept by them; for no way, that I know of, for preſerving corn ſweet, is equal to that of keeping it in the ſtraw.

and encouraged in little thefts; by which means they become diſſolute, and regardleſs of duty, or any *due ſubordination*. But I would have this underſtood in general, not of all labourers families; only, that it is oftner the caſe with the families of the labourers than with the families of the ſmall farmers.

After having conſidered theſe ſame lands in two different ſtates, firſt, as if held and uſed as one farm, and then, as if held and uſed in 8 ſmall ones, it plainly appears to me, that the *number of people* likely to be dependent on ſuch lands, in ſuch different occupations, is much the greateſt in the eight farms; and the increaſe or difference of twenty-nine perſons, will be all of the middle claſs, that is, of the leſſer farmers; which are the moſt *uſeful* ſubjects of all the three claſſes For, it is as evident as any propoſition in Euclid, that thoſe who raiſe the greateſt quantity of proviſions from their lands, are more uſeful than thoſe who raiſe leſs, if in all other reſpects they are equal.

Beſides

Beſides, when the ſame lands are ſuppoſed to be held in eight different occupations, though the number of the people depending on them is *increaſed* much beyond what they are likely to be, while uſed in one occupation; yet the number of the labourers and their families is *decreaſed*; ſo that we may reaſonably expect, that by this means, the number of *poor* would be *leſſened*, at the ſame time that the value of the lands would be *advanced*. By which, the poors rates would be leſſened both ways, that is, by a *decreaſe* in the number of the poor, and an *increaſe* in the value of the lands.

Thus, after conſidering this ſubject attentively, it appears to me, even to a demonſtration, that the ſame lands while *held* and *uſed* in ſmall farms, are likelier to bear a greater rent and produce a greater quantity of proviſions, than while uſed in large farms. And alſo, that the number of the poor, and the rates raiſed for the relief of the poor, would certainly both be leſs than they *will* if held and uſed in large occupations.

Having

Having diſcovered where the diſeaſe lies, the next thing is to find out a *remedy* or *cure*. And this certainly is in the power of the land-owners; but unleſs I can convince them that it is for their own advantage to redreſs this grievance, and *do* that juſtice which is due to their country; I am afraid it will be to little purpoſe to inform them of it, with regard to the public good alone. We find, that *ſelf-intereſt* is much the ſtrongeſt motive, and though all may ſeem to approve of the thing when talked of as a *public concern*; yet except all were compelled to it by penal laws, the public good alone would have but little influence. As moſt are apt to excuſe themſelves in ſuch caſes, and think it would be a weakneſs in them to give up what they believe tends to their own intereſt, except others would, or were compelled to do the ſame.

Therefore, I ſhall recommend it to all land owners, to conſider the *compariſon* I have here made, of the ſame lands; firſt, as if held

and

and uſed by one tenant, and then as divided and uſed by eight tenants: where I think it is clearly ſhewn, that thoſe lands which when held and uſed as one farm, and fairly worth no more than 300 l. a year, will, if divided, and uſed by eight tenants, in eight different farms, be as well worth 400 l. a year. And this is more than ſufficient to pay the difference of what it would coſt to repair the whole in eight ſeparate farms, above what it would coſt to repair the whole as one farm. For, though it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe the *difference* might be conſiderable, yet I am perſuaded, it would not much exceed one fourth part of what the rent would be advanced.

And, to give all the ſatisfaction in this caſe, in my power, I will compare the different expence likely to ariſe from keeping up and repairing the buildings proper for theſe lands in both ſtates, according to the beſt eſtimates I am able to make. But in this I would be underſtood of what is likely to be *neceſſary* for twenty or thirty years together, at an average

rage one year with another: ſuppoſing the premiſes were at the beginning in good and tenantable repair, and kept and left ſo at the end; and that there are no more buildings than what are neceſſary for the lands in either ſtate.

I will begin with the whole as *one farm*. In which ſtate, I compute it will *coſt* for all repairs, about eight or nine per cent. of the rent. Suppoſe 9, then, as this rent is 300l. a year; 27l. a year is the charge of all repairs for the whole as one farm.

Then, for the whole in *eight farms*. In this ſtate I compute it will *coſt* about twelve or fourteen per cent. Suppoſe fourteen, and as the rent is 400l. a year; fifty-ſix pound a year is the charge of repairing the whole in eight farms.

From this charge of repairing the whole in 8 farms,	56l.
Take that for repairing the whole in one farm,	27l.
And there remains,	29l.

which

which ſum of twenty-nine pounds is what it would coſt to repair the whole in eight farms, more than it will in one.

And I have before ſhewn, that the rent of the whole in 8 farms will exceed the rent of the whole in one by	100l.
Then take 29l. the difference for repairs, from 100l. the difference in the rent, and there remains,	71l.

And this ſum of ſeventy-one pound is what the land-owner would gain by letting the whole in eight farms, more than he would by letting the whole in one: which is 17 three-fourths per cent. of the improved *rent* when lett as eight farms.

This plainly ſhews the error which many perſons have run into, from a *miſtaken notion* of theſe things; for they by pulling down the houſes on their little farms, and laying ſeveveral together to make one large one, deceive themſelves

themſelves, thinking that by getting rid of the repairs to thoſe houſes, they ſhall be gainers by it: when it plainly appears, that inſtead of what they aimed at, they are leſſening the value of their lands by the acre; and that too, ſo as to loſe much more by it than they expected to ſave or gain.

This loſs, with regard to the rent, affects the land-owners particularly; tho' perhaps, not at the firſt letting, as I ſhall ſhew by and by. But then, if we conſider this practice with regard to the public as now between the *wrong notions* of the land-owners, & the *rapaciouſneſs* of the large farmers, it not only leſſens the produce of the lands, but alſo that it naturally tends to *depopulate* the country, it will appear ſtill more *prejudicial.* For many a worthy couple, who have, by frugality in ſervice, ſaved what is ſufficient to ſtock a ſmall farm, could they get one, are, from the difficulty in getting ſuch a one, kept from marrying, and continue ſervants ſtill, waiting in hopes; but, from the cauſes above-mentioned

 are

are frequently diſappointed, and the number of inhabitants in the country, is thereby leſſened.

The *effects* of which are now evidently to be ſeen in this reſpect, by the want of hands in *agriculture*, as many perſons in the country, from the difficulty of getting employments in the way they have been brought up, go to London to ſeek employment there; which help to ſwell that head already too big for the body: And of thoſe that ſtay at home, much the greater part muſt become labourers, and imcorporate with the lower claſs; who, in times of ſcarcity, will grow uneaſy and tumultuous; and ſo, *riots*, of courſe, will be the conſequence, while things are continued as they are. For, without ſome *alteration* be made, ſome way or other, with regard to theſe things, in my opinion, *proviſions* are not likely to be cheap, except in ſuch years as the crops ſhall be very plentiful, not only in theſe kingdoms, but in all the neighbouring ſtates. And the longer they are continued thus, the greater

will

will be the want of the people to do the labour neceſſary for improving the lands; and thus the *ſcarcity* muſt and will increaſe from the want of hands to be employed in cultivating the land. Therefore, theſe effects flowing from this practice of Uniting and Monopolizing Farms, are of the utmoſt importance to the nation; for, as the ingenious Mr. Hanway has obſerved in his Earneſt Appeal, "the "productions of the earth ſtand firſt in rank, "if we have not the firſt view to the keeping "a ſufficient number of hands employed in "agriculture, the whole will languiſh and "decay."

It is not to be ſuppoſed, that the land-owners ſee theſe conſequences when they lay little farms together; nay, they ſeldom feel the effects of it themſelves, for *the firſt time of letting them*; not till they are incorporated into one farm, and come to be lett together. And even then, there are but few that perceive it. For, as the uniting of farms is often done to avoid an expence, of either rebuilding, or re-

pairing the buildings to the ſmall farms; when another tenant, to whom theſe lands joined, thinks he can do moſt of the work with the ſame horſes and ſervants he then has; and though he may think it dear, yet for the ſake of a ſmall advantage, or of being thought more important, he will take it; perhaps, at the old rent, or, with a trifling abatement for the houſe only. And then the land-owner is perſuaded he has got rid of an *immediate expence*, and without any loſs to himſelf: and thus far perhaps it is true, that he does get rid of an immediate expence, and without any loſs to himſelf ſo long as the term this firſt lett is for; but if he does, yet in moſt caſes, he, or they, that ſucceed to the eſtate, when it comes to be *incorporated* into one farm and lett together will, from the *increaſe* of quantity, whether they are ſenſible of it or not, have the rent lowered by the acre, or elſe not ſo much advanced, as they might have been, if held ſeparate. This is matter of fact in all places I have had opportunities of obſerving, and I apprehend

apprehend it muſt be ſo, in all parts of England; eſpecially where the farms *conſiſt moſtly of arable lands.*

After having diſcovered the chief cauſe of theſe *calamities*, which are now ſo *alarming*, and ſhewn that it is in the power, and for the intereſt of the land-owners to remove it; I wiſh my arguments may be ſufficient to convince them, that as members of the community, they *ought* to do all they can to promote the welfare of it, ſo as to influence them to take every opportunity, and uſe their beſt endeavours to effect it. And to aſſiſt ſuch as ſhall be ſo inclined, I will give my opinion concerning the quantities of land I would adviſe them to *divide* their eſtates into, to produce theſe ſalutary effects.

Though I have ſhewn that arable lands held and uſed in ſmall quantities tend moſt to the *public good*, and alſo to the advantage of the *land-owners*; yet I would not be underſtood, to adviſe laying out ſuch as are now uſed

in large occupations, into *very ſmall ones*, ſo that the occupier ſhall not have enough to employ above two horſes; becauſe in ſuch ſmall ones the buildings to be erected would come to too much for the advance that would be made in the rent. Yet, when they are already built upon, I ſhall adviſe to keep up the buildings, and lett them ſeparate as they are; for, I know that their rents moſtly do anſwer the expence of the repairs. But when lands now held in large occupations, are ſituated conveniently to be *divided* into parts, ſo as each part might be ſufficient to employ conſtantly ſo many horſes as would be wanted to draw two or three plows, with which the farmer would be able to till his lands, carry out his produce, bring home manure, and do his buſineſs regularly: theſe are the quantities I would prefer before any other, where circumſtances would admit of it. But theſe quantities are not always to be proportioned by the rents, becauſe lands are lett at very different prices by the acre, and alſo, the labour required

quired is much greater in ſome lands than it is in others: therefore, theſe things ought to be well conſidered in proportioning the quantities proper to be laid into ſuch farms. And in ſuch caſes where meadows & other *graſs lands* as are not uſually plowed, are convenient to be held with ſome arable lands, it would then be proper to lett ſo much arable with thoſe graſs lands as is ſufficient to employ conſtantly ſo many horſes as will be wanted for two or three plows, by which the farm would be much enlarged, and worthy the attention of a ſubſtantial farmer: and theſe graſs lands would be a means to improve the arable by the cattle that would be kept on them, and the fodder raiſed from them. So that what I would principally recommended is, not to lett the *arable-lands* to be held and uſed in *ſuch large quantities*, by any one perſon, as they now are: for it is the arable lands, that employ the greateſt number of people, and from them the greateſt improvements are made. As to graſs lands, proper only for fattening cattle, thoſe, I am

of

of opinion, may, without any injury to the public or land-owners, be held and uſed in large quantities. And thus, as there always muſt and will be different degrees in rank and ſubſtance, among farmers, as in all other callings; by theſe means they might be fitted with occupations of different ſizes in proportion to their abilities.

In many caſes, where farms have been united, the buildings are ſtill ſtanding, and the houſes which did belong to the little farms, are lett as cottages; there it is very eaſy to reduce them to their *priſtine ſtate*, and is what every land-owner that has his own intereſt at heart, I hope will do: and if he has any *feeling* for his fellow-creatures, he is *inexcuſable* if he neglects it. And where the buildings have been taking down, or in lands that never were divided; even there, would the land-owners but make proper diviſions and build upon them, I am of opinion, their eſtates wouldimproved in value by the *advance*

of

of rent, more than the *expence* they would be at in erecting ſuch buildings. And in doing this, they would diſtinguiſh themſelves as *worthy members* of the community, as it would certainly tend to the good of every individual in the kingdom: and at the ſame time promote their own intereſt.

Having ſhewn and explained the bad conſequences attending this practice of Uniting and monopolizing of Farms, and given my opinion concerning letting arable lands, with reſpect to the quantity to be held and uſed by one farmer; I ſhall add an obſervation or two concerning *leaſes*, which I think may be of uſe both to the land-owner and occupier, and likewiſe to the public. As every thing which is likely to cauſe our lands to yield a larger quantity of proviſions ought carefully to be attended to.

When arable lands are divided into proper quantities to be *held* and *uſed* by one farmer, we are then to conſider the proper term to lett them

them for: as in no caſe where it can be avoided, would I adviſe letting them ſo as to be held from year to year; or on very ſhort leaſes; for when held in that manner, it certainly leſſens the quantity of the produce of thoſe lands.

To explain this, ſuppoſe a tenant takes a leaſe of a farm for only ſeven years; then as he has no aſſurance of *holding* it any longer than only for that time, all that can reaſonably be expected from him in that caſe, is, to till the lands properly, and to lay on them what manure he raiſes from them, with a little other cheap ſtuff purchaſed and put on them in the firſt two or three years: all which will be intirely wore out before the end of the ſeven years, the time his leaſe was for. And in the laſt three or four years of a leaſe, all tenants (except they have an aſſurance before that time, of another term when the preſent is expired) will in their ſtile *drive* their lands: by which I mean, they crop them all they can, without either laying them down to feed or reſt,

reſt, or putting any manure upon them, more than what riſes from the lands, and by their leaſes they are bound to lay on them. Thus, at the end of this ſeven years leaſe, the lands are not likely to be ſo good as when this tenant took them. And ſuppoſe that he, or any other tenant, takes another ſeven years leaſe of the ſame premiſes, and goes on in the ſame manner to the end of this ſecond leaſe; and then to a third, making together twenty one years; always *driving* his lands at the end of every ſeven; in this way, there is no likelihood of the farm being better while thus uſed, but great reaſon to expect it will grow worſe, and decline in its produce.

On the contrary ſuppoſe this tenant had at firſt taken the ſame farm on a leaſe for twenty one years, in one term; then he, if a good farmer, would have *improved his lands* at the begining of his term with ſubſtantial and durable manures, ſuch as he thought moſt ſuitable and eaſieſt procured, although expenſive; and probably this would have taken ſome

years

years before all would have been done. Yet theſe kind of manures improve the lands to ſuch a degree, as to leave them better than before, even fifteen or twenty years after they have been laid on them: and beſides theſe; during the whole term the tenant would have bren conſtantly returning on them, all the manure he could raiſe from them; and ſuppoſing them to have one *driving* at laſt; yet there cannot be any doubt, but that thoſe lands while thus held in one term for twenty one years, would have yielded *a greater produce* than when held for the ſame time by three ſeperate leaſes of ſeven years, in each. And not only ſo but during that time, the tenant would have a much better *bargain* of them in one leaſe than in three; and at the end, they would have been worth a greater rent to the next ſucceeding tenant. All which I think ſo evident to any perſon in the leaſt converſant in theſe affairs, that when thus explained, there needs no other reaſons to enforce them.

I ſhall likewiſe adviſe all land-owners not to be too ſtrict in their covenants to prevent their tenants *plowing* up any kind of *graſs-lands*. For though in marſhes and low meadows they ought to be reſtrained, yet in upland paſtures it is often done with great advantage, and without any damage to the land-owners. For many of thoſe *uplands* after having been laid a long time in graſs, yield very ſlight crops, but were they plowed a few years, and then laid down again, they would while plowed yield large crops of grain, and when laid down again much larger crops of graſs. I have known this practiſed on lands that a few years before were almoſt all laid in graſs for keeping of cows; but now, having plowed a good part of them, the farmers, as well as the land-owners have found their account in it. As on theſe lands when firſt plowed, after two or three crops of grain, they ſow artificial graſſes, turnips, &c. by which they are able to keep as many cows as before, and to keep them better; their cows being

better

better kept, they make more of them, and by plowing more land they grow more corn and raiſe a greater quantity of manure for improving them. Thus a *greater quantity of proviſions* are raiſed from the ſame lands, and the tenants are able to pay greater rents for them.

I believe it is now paſt all doubt with the deſcerning part of the nation, that the preſent practice of Uniting and Monopolizing of Farms, is attended with bad conſequences to the community; and alſo, that it is the *chief cauſe* of the preſent high prices of all kinds of *proviſions*, yet I would not be underſtood as if I thought it the only one, for I know there are others that tend to produce the ſame effect: two of which I ſhall only mention, they being ſo evident as not to need any arguments to prove them. And thoſe are, the preſent general *diſſipation and extravagance* in all ranks of people; and the great increaſe in the *number of horſes* bred and kept. Both theſe greatly *diminiſh* the produce of our lands; and perhaps may be nearly of the ſame date; the preciſe

era

era of them I will not take upon me to determine, but for twenty years paſt, they, as well as *uniting of farms*, have all been increaſing. So that ſuppoſing the produce of our lands twenty years ago were then nearly equal to our conſumption, by all theſe *cauſes* operating together, there muſt now be a *deficiency*. And if we conſider that during the laſt twenty years the prices of almoſt all kinds of proviſions have been increaſing, and alſo that in the firſt part of that time the quantity of corn exported did decreaſe till 1756, and then was ſtop'd, and large quantities were imported for two or three years; & ſince 1756 all export have been ſtoped ſeveral times, and an import allowed; but the difference between the export and import I am not able to determine (not having ſeen any account made up ſo far.) But as our preſent *want of corn* is evident, whoever conſiders this impartially, in my opinion, they muſt be convinced, that *theſe cauſes* have in a great meaſure, had this conſequence. For I am of opinion that the

ſtocks

ſtocks of old corn in hand for ſome years paſt, at the ſeveral times of harveſt, have been growing leſs and leſs, year after year; although much greater quantities have been imported ſince the year 1756 than were ever known before in ſo ſhort a time. And before 1756 I do not find that corn was ever permitted to be imported duty free; but ſince that great quantities; which evidently ſhews a *deficiency*, that muſt drain the nation of its *ſpecie*. Now what *reflection* is a thinking mind likely to make on this? The anſwer is plain, that for want of due *oeconomy* we are now deprived of that *peace and plenty* we uſed to enjoy.

All thoſe cauſes above mentioned muſt occaſion a conſtant *diminution*, or *waſte*, of the produce of our lands. But the *ſudden advance* of the price of wheat at this time, took its riſe from another cauſe, which is *temporary*: for though that grain has borne a high price for ſome years before, yet this ſudden advance now,

now ſeems to me, to proceed from a deficiency in quantity, and that more than was expected by moſt people. However, the cauſe is evident, and eaſily to be accounted for, without any imputation of unfair dealings in either the farmers or thoſe tradeſmen whoſe buſineſs it is to buy or manufacture that commodity.

For the ſeaſon for *ſowing of wheat* in the autumn of the year 1770, was very unfavourable, by reaſon of the wetneſs of the weather; in ſo much, that vaſt quantities of land intended by the farmers to have been ſown with it at that time, could not be ſown in ſuch condition as to give them any reaſonable hopes of a crop from them at the ſucceeding harveſt. And though many farmers did ſow their lands after Chriſtmas, yet the crops from thoſe lands ſown ſo late were much inferior to what might have been expected from them, had it been done in proper ſeaſon: and great quantities of land were not ſown at all: ſo that the pro-

duce of wheat at the laſt harveſt was greatly leſſened by the wetneſs of the weather at the proper ſeaſon for ſowing it. And though that wheat crop was not unfavourable, comparing its produce with other years by the acre, yet it was not great; and the deficiency in quantity of that grain now wanted (more than might have been expected from the other cauſes before-mentioned) is for the moſt part occaſioned by that unfavourable ſeaſon for ſowing wheat in the autumn of the year 1770. But this is not all, for that *ſcanty produce* of the laſt harveſt was leſſened by another circumſtance, which though it increaſes our preſent wants, yet it muſt give us good hopes of a greater plenty after the next harveſt. And that is the laſt *ſeed time* for ſowing of wheat was a *remarkable good one*, and the price being high, a much greater quantity of land was then ſown with wheat than is uſual in moſt years; by which the produce of that grain from the laſt harveſt was greatly leſſened by a

more

more than ordinary quantity being uſed to ſeed the land.

Thus it appears, as a natural conſequence from the two laſt ſeaſons for ſowing of wheat, that there muſt be a deficiency; and that the preſent *ſcarcity* of that grain, is not an artificial one.

Many perſons of good underſtanding have entertained *extravagant notions* relating to the produce of our *corn lands*; ſuppoſing that the produce of one good year is ſufficient for our *own conſumption*, for three, four, or more years. And perhaps this may be true in ſome particular places; but with reſpect to the whole kingdom, 'tis vaſtly erroneous.

And the beſt way to eſtimate this, is to compare the quantity of the *whole growth* of the kingdom, with the quantity exported, during the time we did export corn. A particular account of which is found in a pamphlet entitled. *Three tracts on the corn trade and corn*

Laws, 2d. edition, page 143, which ſeems to be computed with great accuracy and preciſion. The *conſumption* is computed from the number of the people, to which is added the quantity *exported*, & from that ſum is taken the quantity *imported*, the remainder is the quantity of the whole growth. And by this account it appears, that upon an average for 68 years, from 1697 to 1765, the export of wheat for all that time, was not quite *one nineteenth part* of the growth. But if we compare the growth of all ſorts of corn together, with the export of all ſorts for that time (as may be ſeen in that work at p. 144) it will appear that " *the* " *export is barely one thirty-ſecond part of the* " *conſumption, one thirty-third part of the* " *growth, one thirty-ſixth part of the growth in-* " *cluding the ſeed, and not near one third of the* " *ſeed itſelf.*"

And as the export was all we had above our own conſumption, it evidently appears, that upon an average one year with another, for that 68 years, we were ourſelves a *market* for all the produce of our wheat, excepting one

one nineteenth part. But comparing the quantity of all ſorts of corn together, and the export for that time, it appears, that our own conſumption was for all that time equal to the whole produce of our lands, excepting only one thirty-third part thereof. How *widely diſferent* is this account from what thoſe people above mentioned are apt to believe? Therefore, as our *conſumption* ſo nearly equals our whole produce, whenever our *old ſtock of corn* in hand at any harveſt is not *large*, and the crops of that year prove *deficient*, it muſt greatly affect the *price*. And whoever conſiders the ſmall difference there is between the produce of our lands and our conſumption, muſt be convinced, that every practice or cuſtom likely to leſſen the produce of our lands, or to *waſte* it improperly when produced, ought carefully to be guarded againſt; as it is of *the utmoſt importance to the whole community*.

Having ſhewn the evil tendency of Uniting and Monopolizing of Farms, and given my opinion

opinion of the methods moſt likely to remedy the evil, as well as for letting farms ſo that they may yield the greater increaſe, (all which I preſume, are worthy the *attention* of the *public*) and then ſubjoined a few obſervations to ſhew the principal cauſes of the preſent high prices of proviſions: I ſhall only add, if we are not wanting in ourſelves, we may ſafely rely upon that power for our daily bread, who is *all-ſufficient*, and has promiſed, that *ſeed-time and harveſt ſhall never fail.* For notwithſtanding the uncertainty of the ſeaſons, on which the whole does in appearance ſo much *depend*, yet it rarely happens but that the produce of the earth, one year with another is ſufficient for our ſupport. Therefore, ſo far as our *wants* proceed as a natural conſequence from our own neglect or miſmanagement, we are inexcuſeable. And though ignorance may be pleaded in extenuation of *guilt*, for thoſe who knew not the error of their ways, yet certainly thoſe who do know, and ſtill perſiſt in any evil practice, they muſt be ſelf condemned.

F I N I S.